
A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

ARTICLE IV.

THE BROAD CHURCH THEOLOGY.[1]

BY THE REV. HENRY C. HITCHCOCK, SOMERVILLE, MASS.

THERE is a form of theology to which, in Great Britain originally, and in this country also by a kind of inheritance, has been applied the somewhat vague title of "Broad Church;" a mode of thinking, however, by no means vague in purpose, but one which has revealed from the start a well-defined tendency, together with no little intensity of conviction and aggressive energy, and has now become one of the prominent elements to be reckoned with in any review of the current religious speculations of our time. As a distinctive mental movement, it is already of sufficient age in the world to have begun to be treated historically in recent years by such writers as Rigg, Pfleiderer, Hurst, Principal Tulloch, and others, who, though differing widely as to its value, have all agreed in tracing its primal impulse to Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and especially to the views of that philosopher regarding the higher spiritual office of the reason, as distinct from the understanding, and his modifications of the theological theories of inspiration and the atonement. In his rejection of the long prevalent views of British thinkers on these subjects, and which were doubtless fairly open to the charge he brought against them of being too mechanical, Coleridge was followed by some of the brightest minds of England in the first half of the present century, including Whately and Milman and Thurwall, Hampden, author of the noted Bampton lectures for 1833, the two brothers

[1] An address delivered before the Alumni of the Theological Seminary at Oberlin, at Commencement, May 28, 1891.

Hare, the two Wilberforces, and above all the famous Arnold of Rugby, who, by reason of his remarkably ethical spirit, as well as his commanding position as an educator, may be called the most influential of Coleridge's immediate disciples. From these the stream descended to Temple, the successor of Arnold at Rugby; to Stanley, his biographer; to Martineau and Francis Newman; to Kingsley and Dean Trench; to Robertson of Brighton, to Tennyson the poet, Ruskin the artist, McDonald the novelist, and especially to Frederick Denison Maurice, who, by his strong faith in the religious intuitions of the mind, together with a personal character of singular devoutness, all finding expression in a very prolific and captivating pen, contributed, more than either of the others, perhaps more than all of them, to the diffusion of the new mental tendency. It will serve our convenience, therefore, as well as meet the demands of historic proportion, in contemplating some of the excellencies and defects of this mode of thinking, to let Maurice stand somewhat in the centre of this remarkable group of men, though not without reference it may be in passing to some of the minor rills of thought that flowed into, or else alongside, his broader and fuller stream.

It is always to be presumed that any new and decisive movement in theology owes its awakening impulse to some freshly apprehended truth in philosophy. It was so in the present case. On its metaphysical side, in fact, it is, that we shall find most in this movement to commend. But in order to justify this remark, we shall need to recur for a single moment to that ancient battle-ground regarding the fac-

main tendency was towards the outward and the finite. In England especially it was a period of spiritual lassitude and reaction after the exhausting heroism of the great politico-ecclesiastical Revolution of 1688. The people, worn out, and many of them impoverished by the long strife, were begging for rest. Give us a summer of quiet, they said, from these hard questions about which good men differ, and which no earthly authority, at best, seems competent to decide. Let us get back to things tangible,—to our farms, our mills, and our merchandise, which, without torturing our brain with the uncertainties of the future, will yield us a little satisfaction at least in the present. For such a weary, temporizing age as this the precise philosophic anodyne was soon forthcoming. Locke, and Hartley, and Berkeley, and Hume,—all combined to become its apologist and mouth-piece. Though differing widely from each other in ultimate spirit and motive, they all agreed nevertheless in preaching the folly of fundamental inquiry, and the utter impotence of the human faculties in regard to things beyond the realm of time and sense. Nor did the Scotch schools of Reid and his successors, though keen enough to detect the error of Locke, succeed in pointing out the mode of correcting that error. Meanwhile Immanuel Kant, in the remoteness of his German study, himself a Scotchman by descent, and contemplating with serious concern the failure of British speculation, set himself to the task of rescuing reality from the threatening gulf of scepticism. Seeing the need of some entirely new mode of approaching the subject, he made bold announcement of his purpose to go to the bottom and to introduce such a complete reform in the habit of thinking as that men thenceforth should be enabled with con-

ceeded, we are plunged into the midst of a controversy between two antagonistic schools of his disciples, each appealing to the same master as authority for directly opposite conclusions; a controversy that is being waged as hotly today as it was when men first opened the pages of the world-famous "Critiques." Into the lists of such a debate, however, we have no need to enter. It is enough for our present purpose, that the still unsettled condition of Kantian interpretation, even after a hundred years of toil on the part of his admirers, shows that if Kant really ever thought his way through to a conclusion satisfactory to himself, he utterly failed to make the world understand what that conclusion was. Starting out with the affirmation that the human soul is so endowed by its Maker that it lays hold of a universe external to itself; that not mere appearances, but things in themselves, are the causes of our sensations; that the self-conscious liberty of man as a mental agent reaches beyond itself, becoming the cause of actions which take place in space and time; that God himself, though we know him first as simply immanent in the soul and as imposing there his moral law, becomes also no less known to us as an operative energy in the world outside, working ever towards an ultimate perfection, or moral unity of the world without and the world within,—beginning thus, I say, this powerful thinker seemed to be in the track of some valuable results. But just as he was fairly ready apparently to fall upon scepticism with a crushing blow, strangely enough, his own speculative confidence in the great intuitions he had just been describing, somehow for the moment failed him; and he proceeded to give back to Locke and Hume a part of the

its assumption that there is such a world? Alas, for the work of the great sage of Koenigsberg! Could uncertainty have been left in a condition more shadowy?

Right at this point, it is, that we meet with Coleridge, the man who seems to have been providentially commissioned to transport to Britain, and so to the English-speaking world, the honey of the German hive, without its poison. In 1798 and 1799 we find him ensconced in the land of the Elbe, entering *con amore* into the new and captivating world of Kant, and bringing to the study all that recent spiritual awakening in his own experience under the influence of which he had already put aside the empiricism of Hartley and Locke, and had discarded Unitarianism in favor of Orthodoxy. He continues the study of Kant after his return to England, turning aside, indeed, for an occasional look at Schelling, but soon repelled by the evident pantheistic drift of the so-called intellectual intuition of that philosopher. The outcome was that Coleridge accepted fully and heartily the positive side of Kant, skipping the negative side with very little mention, as something perhaps for which he simply had no mental affinity, or which did not feel the existing hunger of his mind; a course, by the way, the direct reverse of that pursued a little later by the Scotch philosopher Hamilton, and later still by his brilliant pupil Mansel, with whom the affinity seemed to be for the negative, rather than the positive, side of Kant.

It would be too much to say that Coleridge ever found time to bring all the views of his very prolific mind into a systematic, or even into a purely intellectual, form; but his influence marks none the less an era in the history of philosophy, imparting to it a new tendency, and one more favorable to the distinctive truths of Christianity than it had hitherto received. It was his easy task, indeed, to reaffirm the intentional principles of Kant; but he did this with more consistency and a great deal more emphasis of conviction. He was,

in fact, better endowed by nature for the exposition of a spiritual philosophy than was the powerful German. He held that speculations regarding God need the aid of other faculties besides the logical; that they can never be otherwise than misleading unless they call into play that loftier rational and spiritual nature which is especially appointed to be the medium of communion between man and his Maker. He laid stress on the distance, even intellectually, between the natural and spiritual man, saying that the Christian evidences cannot be fully apprehended save by a devout mind. Nevertheless, over against this, he insisted strongly that the great germinal truths of religion—God, the soul, freedom, immortality—are known by every human mind, known as directly and surely as any object of sense can be; even more so, since objects of sense are at best external to us, while these primal virtues of religion are bound up and implied in the very substratum of our being, in that inmost conscience which is the image of God in us, the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He did not discard, indeed, the ordinary cosmological argument for the divine existence, which Calvin and the Reformers had simply accepted without much revision from the schoolmen, and which had been the main reliance of theologians during the intervening period; he simply invoked the reinforcement of that argument by another, and to his view, still more commanding proof. Hence it followed naturally that religious faith, to the mind of Coleridge, instead of being a vague attempt to believe something that we neither know anything about nor have any means of knowing anything about, is the mind's voluntary recognition and use of those original and universal truths which lie nearest our consciousness and which we know before we know anything else.

Thus Coleridge, taking his stand unquestionably in the intuitional principles of Kant, but holding more rigidly to those principles,—expanding them, in fact, so as to make

them include the whole religious appetency of the human soul,—reached a metaphysical resting-place altogether more intelligible and satisfying than that of his German master. And this aspect of his work,—which was duly and properly his, and for which he has not always been accorded due credit,—this it is that becomes the genesis of the mental movement we are now considering.

Maurice, like Coleridge, was at first a Unitarian, his father being a clergyman of that denomination; but he came at length, as Coleridge had done before him, to find in the Trinitarian belief a better answer to what he regarded as his own spiritual need. Entering the English Church, he became not only a very spirited churchman, but he even went beyond the most of his Coleridgian brethren in his apology for some of the exclusive peculiarities of the Anglican communion. The event which, more than any other, called forth his full powers as a controversialist, and in relation to which we see him, perhaps, at his best, was the famous Bampton lectures of Mansel, on the "Limits of Religious Thought," delivered in 1858. In these remarkable discourses the negative school of speculation may be said to have reached its culmination. The course of argument consisted in a drawing out of the negative conclusions of Kant with all the exhaustive dialectical elaboration of which the favorite pupil of Hamilton was an acknowledged master. The English-speaking world had never before listened to a plea for agnosticism at once so able and so conscientious, and that too from a Christian pulpit, in a great orthodox university, and in professed defence of the Christian faith! The notes, too, affixed to the published volume of the Lectures, were an impressive array of opinions, drawn from many ages, especially from the scholastic period, in support of the doctrine of nescience in relation to all higher truth. The logical absurdities involved, to the view of Mansel, in the very idea of the conceivability of the Infinite by the finite, were made to follow each other in im-

posing procession, and with an effect that seemed altogether overwhelming. At the proper places, also, the preacher poured forth strains of religious eloquence, as if exulting in the work of humbling human pride and chastening that overweening curiosity which would pry into the very thoughts of Omnipotence. Oxford was electrified. Never had dry metaphysics been made so charming. The chapel of St. Mary's was crowded at every lecture. Pious lords and ladies, in their congratulations to the lecturer, saluted him as another *Defensor fidei*, serenely unaware, however, for the moment, that that particular mode of defending the faith would become the signal for the most formidable reawakening of unbelief that British Christianity had ever encountered, supplying the precise metaphysical foundation that was wanted, to quote the words of Pfleiderer, for the scientific agnosticism of Tyndall and Darwin and Spencer, the æsthetic agnosticism of Matthew Arnold, the literary agnosticism of Seeley, the psychological agnosticism of Mill and Ferrier and Bain.

In the duty which Providence devolved upon him of replying to Mansel, it was, as I have said, that Maurice found the crowning opportunity and honor of his life. Here unquestionably was his greatest single service to the truth. Other representatives of the Coleridgian school stood ready to second him,—notably Martineau and Francis Newman,—but it fell to Maurice to lead. It was a memorable debate. Maurice threw his whole soul into it. Placid and amiable scholar that he was, he made no pretence of keeping back his indignation. He contends as one whose most sacred convictions have been outraged. He is too christianly courteous, indeed, to question either his opponent's ability or his sincerity; yet really and truly, to Maurice's solemn way of looking at it, the part of Mansel is the mere part of a juggler,—inventing puzzles and delighting in them, playing fast and loose with the Infinite, making a kind of hocus-pocus of the sublimest of all verities, crying, Presto! lo here it is not;

lo there too it escapes us; and finally, for every need of the poor heart of man, it is nowhere!

But how could a philosopher of Mansel's erudition help being reminded at some point in all his prolonged labor of heaping up contradictions against the cognition of the Infinite, that possibly his own conception of the Infinite was wrong at the base? For infinity in relation to a person means simply the perfection of that person, and limitation in relation to a person is not always an imperfection. Indeed, some limitations are indispensable to a perfect moral being. God, considered as a person, is a more glorious being than he could be as a mere τὸ πᾶν, or impersonal All; and yet personality itself is a limitation, marking the boundary between that which God is and that which he is not. Creation involves a limitation, since it is the bringing into being of other forms of existence distinct from the Power that creates them. Revelation involves a limitation, since it is the pouring forth of the treasures of the divine wisdom and love upon a world outside of the Revealer himself,—a world even in revolt and rebellion against himself. The fact that the Almighty refuses to absorb the universe into his own substance, involves a limitation. The fact that he forbids that the evil should ever become a part of his voluntary being, involves a limitation. These are all limitations, but not imperfections. On the contrary, they are indispensable to the making up of that supreme and adorable fulness of the excellence of the Most High which calls forth the worship of earth and of heaven. In short, Mansel utterly misconstrues the divine infinity. God is indeed a being who is boundless in all the great attributes of power, wisdom, and love; but his boundlessness is not of a kind which, in the phrase of Martineau, "chokes up the universe," making it impossible for anything else to exist. His personality, though infinite, does not exclude other personalities.

So too in regard to the Absolute. Mansel had held that,

in calling God the Absolute, we simply in another way proclaimed him unknowable, giving him a negative title, and one describing the absence of the conditions under which the conception of him is possible. And it is true that the term is negative in form, implying the absence of relations, but the meaning of it is the most positive possible. The term, in fact, is identical in import with the great biblical name of Jehovah, the term which the divine voice itself gave to Moses out of the burning bush,—a name which proclaimed God as absolute in the sense that he is without necessary or dependent relations; that he is the dateless, uncreated One, the cause of whose existence is within, and not outside himself; "I am that I am," being the whole account of his self-existent and eternal Being. This is the name that Moses was to announce to Pharaoh, and by whose authority he was to lead Israel out of Egypt. "Tell Pharoah that I Am hath sent thee."

But now the question is,—and no more vital question was ever propounded,—Did all this mean nothing to Moses? Was it to him only a negation, or "the absence of the conditions under which thought is possible"? Did it bring him no comfort, no new ideas of God, but only a reminder that to know is impossible, and that a proper modesty should make him content not to know? No, far otherwise: this ineffable name was to him the end of negation, a blessed relief from uncertainty; it came like a sunburst through a sky that before was heavy with terror; nothing was ever more positive; it made another man of Moses, putting holy assurance and resolve into his previously halting and timid soul.

But further, says Maurice, if we begin with the view of Mansel, it is a matter to be thought of where we shall stop. Shall we say that amid all the grand range of supersensible things, God alone is appointed to be beyond the reach of man's knowledge? How about those other great verities

which cannot be grasped by the mere logical faculty? How about liberty, morality, existence beyond the grave? Must these too share the same fate with the Divine Nature? Will, for example, is altogether unpresentable under the forms of space and time. Shall we then pronounce it a mere negation, simply another of the conditions under which thought is impossible? Who does not know that it stands among the most necessary and elemental affirmations of our consciousness?

Then the distinction between truths speculative and truths regulative, which is one of the delusions of Kant, unwittingly adopted by the school of Hamilton and Mansel. All reality, we are told, lies beyond the reach of finite knowledge. The *noumenon*, or thing in itself, our faculties fail to grasp. But then this is all right. So it has been expressly ordained. We are not placed in this world to know, but only to act. Hence, in regard to these lofty matters of which we can know nothing speculatively, it is only permitted to us to know them regulatively, that is, in the exercise of a certain blind faith or credulity to accept them sufficiently to make them a guide to conduct. This, it is said, will answer all practical purposes. Whether the speculative and the regulative agree, indeed, we cannot now know; we may know hereafter. But did it never occur to the philosophers who make this peculiar distinction, that in proclaiming a truth to be only regulative, and possibly quite different from the truth speculative, they deprive it at once of any real regulative character? So long as certain words convey to me the conviction that they contain the precise truth that I need to know, just so long these words will have a power to regulate my actions; so far I shall be able to trust them enough really to follow them. But the moment you tell me that the words, after all, may not be true, but possibly even the direct opposite of the truth, their influence over me is gone. I may still conform, indeed, on the ground of a chance or a

probability in favor of their being true; I may conform from the slightest motive so long as conformity costs nothing; conform to please my friends, conform for the sake of social civility, conform to keep in the so-called path of orthodoxy; but no such motive as these will ever lead me to any fiery act of heroism, to go into the battle, to face death itself, or to make any grand step or sacrifice. Nothing large in this world was ever set in motion by any such puny forces. No great movement of religion or human reform was ever started,—one that really told on the masses of men, changing the face of a community, and making men profoundly different and better than they were before,—that did not proceed from the conviction, on the part of the authors of the movement, that they had got hold not simply of a truth, but of *the* truth, the absolute and certain truth, in regard to the matter in hand. This college and this colony, planted in this soil where now we rejoice to be assembled again, is sufficient illustration of this. Before an Oberlin audience I need not plead long in behalf of this view.

And right here, in passing, is one of the most serious objections to this whole negative philosophy,—that it is unfriendly, not only to all fundamental inquiry, but to the very love of truth. What could be more discouraging to such a love, than to preach that the real truth, the ultimate and unchanging verity, has been veiled from human gaze? Why so veiled, indeed, we do not know, but supposably because it is best for us not to know; since the stern fact remains that know we cannot, and our winged spirits but beat their cage in vain.

But still again, asks Maurice, if not now, when will these necessary truths be brought within our reach? In the goodness of his heart, Mansel tries to comfort us with the thought that we may know hereafter. But what foundation can there be for such a hope? If now, to the finite mind,

the Infinite can only be thought of by thinking away from it, till the result is a mere negation, when is it going to be otherwise? Shall we mortals ever cease to be finite? And how is it with the seraphim yonder?—those lofty intelligences that are supposed now to behold the face of God. Are they not finite, and will they ever be otherwise than finite? The fact is, that Mansel, in his elaborate carefulness to be nothing if not logical, and to deal with the great and solemn thoughts of Infinity in a thoroughly dialectical way, overlooks some of the simplest and most obvious truths both of reason and of revelation. Granted,—which is more, indeed, than can be justly granted,—but granted, that his prolonged categories of contradictions are logically faultless, still his argument, for the purpose now in hand, is simply that of a man who insists upon threading the passages of a dark labyrinth with nothing but a lantern to guide him, while just above, and not far away from the useless maze through which he is toiling, are the broad blue sky and the shining sun. Even so it is when we ascend from our small proofs *in Barbara* and *Celarent* and under the condition of earth and time, to that higher reason, that realm of the spirit in man, which is the true heaven of the soul, and through whose open sky the sun of our God is ever shining. The great Maker of the human faculties has never enjoined upon his creatures any factitious humility, such as would be involved in our ignoring or even disparaging the full competency of those faculties to perform their appointed office; nor do we add anything to the hon-

But I am dwelling too long on this part of the subject. I have felt disposed to exhibit somewhat fully Maurice's strength as a metaphysician, both on account of the intrinsic interest of the example of it I have set before you, and also because words of praise would have needed to be more qualified if we had proceeded at once to his rather singular views in theology. A rapid reference, however, to a few of his more important theological opinions, will now occupy the remainder of our time.

There is a real connection, as I intimated at the outset, between the philosophy of Maurice and his theology; but neither of the writers whom I have examined has pointed out that connection. It has been the custom of critics to find the centre of his theology in the incarnation; and there is good reason for so doing; but the real stem by which his theology grows out of its philosophic root is his definition of faith, which is simply a very liberal and partly unwarranted expansion of the Coleridgian definition. With Coleridge, as I have already remarked, faith was soberly confined to things which he regarded as known, to those fundamental verities which are inseparable from the human consciousness. But with Maurice it is made to include a whole realm of fancies, not primarily known, and not revealed in the Scriptures, except to a very peculiar mode of interpretation. Especially does Maurice carry too far the idea of the divine immanence, which in its rational form, indeed, and as demanded by the revelations of recent science, is doubtless one of the modern improvements in theologic statement. The remark, for example, of Professor Flint, that "a sound theism acknowledges God's immanence in the world while holding fast to his personality;" and that of Martineau, that "God is no longer conceived as the 'First Cause' prefixed to the scheme of things, but as the Indwelling Cause pervading that scheme,"—these expressions represent the better opinion now, without doubt, even

among conservative theologians. But Maurice adopts a very peculiar view of the divine immanence, making it not only natural, but even mystical and redemptive; making it, in fact, the real and only gospel, the indwelling of God in every human being, performing in each all the gracious operations described in the New Testament; of which immanence the incarnation of Christ is simply the advertisement and publication. The Eternal Word becoming flesh and dwelling amongst us, was simply to announce, to illustrate, and impress upon the world, the fact of this precious and universal indwelling. All parts of our Lord's earthly ministry had one and the same end, and taught the same thing, only in varying forms. Throughout all his incarnate toil and sacrifice, including his suffering on the cross, the end was simply this. There was no reference, whatever, to any need on the part of God, or the justice of God, or the law of God, of the Divine Moral Government, in order to redemption. All that was needed was that the fact of God's indwelling in every heart of man should become realized and known; that men should see the eternal love of God thus revealed. Maurice contemplates with great devoutness of feeling this sublime mission of Christ as a revealer,—a revealer not simply of God's disposition to save men, but of the fact that he had saved them. He longs with all the powers of his fervent nature that men may discover that they are saved. And he pleads, sometimes in indignation, sometimes in pathetic tones, that preaching and theology may have done with discussing conditions, and may go to work to shout out the great fact of man's salvation. His system is thus very simple. Having this one idea, you have all. This is the one point, the one thread running through the whole structure. If he ever varies, it is when he is temporarily embarrassed by some text of Scripture, so that under the hard strain of interpretation he

is led, consciously or unconsciously, to break the harmony of his scheme.

He begins by doing full justice to the true and proper divinity of our Lord. He says the whole world is fast coming to this, through all its best scholarship, through all its devoutest thought. It is not a man, it is not an angel, it is the incarnate God, who dwells in our humanity. Writing to his father, who was pained by his having forsaken the Unitarians, he says, "What my heart needs is to have God, the Invisible and Unsearchable, revealed in human form, as a man, such as can be understood, conversing with us, living amongst us; who, in order thus completely to reveal God, cannot be himself less than God." The greater simplicity, he says, of the Unitarian faith, is of little value, unless it accounts for facts that we know, and especially unless it satisfies the deep cry of the soul. A few months later he writes also to comfort his mother, who was not, like her husband, a Unitarian, but was under a temporary cloud as to her own Christian hope. Says this earnest son to his mother: "The truth is that every man is in Christ, created in him, who is the Head of every man. To believe, therefore, that we are in Christ does not require any special religious experience. The warrant for this faith is that we can do absolutely nothing without him, whether it be to keep his commandments, or pray, or hope, or love; and yet he bids us do all these things." How far this argument comforted his pious mother we are not informed, though it might have been interesting for us to know.

With this view of the divine indwelling, it became necessary, of course, for Maurice to recast the whole circle of the

sun is shining, indeed, only we do not see it. God is always in us, only we do not realize it. Our sin is our failure to realize it. If the conception here be somewhat shadowy, still the impression is that sin is mainly a misfortune. The positive idea of guilt has hardly any place in the system of Maurice.

The fall of man, therefore, was not the loss of the divine indwelling, but simply of its realization. He combats with indignation the idea that man really forfeited the divine presence by his sin. "I consider it the great error of the time," he said, "the denial that man continued to be in the image of God after the fall."

It follows from this that human agency and responsibility, also, are reduced to the lowest terms. Maurice speaks often, indeed, of man's own will and of his self-will, but usually in a bad sense, and never as the free and kingly power of a holy choice. So far as he has any conception of human agency, it is a pantheistic conception. In the human soul itself there is no ability whatever to meet the divine requirements. Man of himself can do not a living thing, but only the divine immanence in him.

Hence it follows further, that man's failure to realize the fact of the divine indwelling, being a matter of misfortune more than of guilt, ought to be looked upon with a great deal of compassionate allowance, and ought to be relieved by all possible extension of time and opportunity. Maurice protests against being called a Universalist, and yet he repudiates utterly the whole idea of a limited probation. And

jected; that, as the possession of righteousness, love, and truth constitute eternal blessedness, so selfishness and sin in the heart constitute eternal misery." He complains that too much of modern preaching does not bring home the true doctrine of hell against particular sins and the consciences of particular evil-doers; that the solemn Scriptures about the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched, are left to float vaguely in the mere rhetoric of discourses, instead of being hurled against the individual drunkard, adulterer, gambler, parasite, oppressor." Dr. Jelf had asked him what he thought about the cases of Judas and Voltaire; to which he answered, "Nothing has been revealed to me about the state of Voltaire; something is said about Judas, namely, that 'it had been better for that man if he had not been born.' The construing of the words, indeed, is difficult, and yet I have no other to offer. I receive them with awe and reverence, as the words of him who knows what is in man, and who died for man. Nor do I find them merely terrible, though they are so terrible."

With regard to faith, conversion, regeneration, adoption, sanctification, assurance, perseverance, they are all described in one word. In the system of Maurice they are all and each simply the realization of the indwelling Christ. These great historic doctrines, which have occupied so much thought and filled out so many tomes of discussion, signify no new relation, after all, between the human soul and its God, since none is needed, but only the apprehension of an existing relation.

In regard to his views of justification and the atonement, however, it is important perhaps to add a single word, especially

more notable changes of this sort that have occurred within the last forty or fifty years. Indeed, one is at a loss almost every day whether to be amazed or simply amused at the feeling of certain very excellent people, of certain very able and excellent minds, their almost violent feeling, against that particular view of our Lord's work which is logically involved in that high view of his person which nevertheless they firmly hold, and which is even axiomatically involved in any view of the work of Christ which would find in that work a redemption from the guilt of sin. To say of these good brethren, therefore, that they are Trinitarians as to the person of Christ, and Unitarians as to his work, and that the fate of the man who tried to ride two horses must logically be theirs, however unwelcome to their sense of having received a new and wonderful light, is nevertheless the simple truth of their condition. Just so it was, in fact, in the case both of Coleridge and Maurice. The one weakest point in the theology of Coleridge was precisely in this, that in becoming a Trinitarian, he did not embrace a Trinitarian view of the atonement. He was repelled, no doubt, by certain crudities of theory which he found still ruling in the orthodox circles of Britain; such as the notion of a literal imputation to Christ of the sins of men, and his consequent endurance of the literal penalty due to those sins. In sheer revolt from a view so offensive to his sensibility, Coleridge went to the opposite extreme of contemplating our Lord's sacrifice wholly on its moral, and not at all on its judicial side. As Professor Shedd rightly remarks in his Introduction, "Coleridge began with an idea radically different from that which Revelation declares to have been in the mind of God. He looked upon the atonement as in no sense an escape from guilt, but only as a deliverance from corruption." From which it followed naturally enough that Maurice, taking his guiding impulse from Coleridge, does the same thing. He makes justification merely synonomous with sanctification.

He excludes all reference to the past. Even the καταλλαγή itself, the reconciliation, looks only to the present and the future, never to the past. With all the devout and thankful enthusiasm of a very Copernicus in theology, Maurice calls attention to this new centre whence now he surveys all the circling orbs of Christian doctrine. In reading him, one is reminded irresistibly of our own Bushnell, and the great eloquence and spiritual fervor with which he advocates substantially the same view; though due remembrance, of course, must be had of those fortunate, or else unfortunate, tergiversations by which Bushnell's first position was essentially modified. Mr. Beecher's great influence was, on the whole, on the side of the same view, not by reason of any systematic discussion which he ever gave to the subject of the atonement, so much as by reason of suggestive omissions from his preaching. Within a few days the editor of a religious weekly, who is also the successor of Mr. Beecher in the pastorate of an influential church, has somewhat startled his heretofore unsuspecting readers by announcing the remarkable discovery that the forgiveness of sin is not the act of God, but of the sinner himself. Remission, he says, or the putting away of sin, is only a cessation of sinning; and that, of course, can be accomplished by nobody but the sinner himself. The editor is frank enough, indeed, to confess that there are difficulties in the way of this view. He admits that it is not the popular view; that it will require a revision of our English dictionary; that it will involve the omission of many important passages from the New Testament, and even the impracticability of explaining the deepest and best part of the Christian experience of the ages; but for all this he is confident that his discovery lies in the sure path of future doctrinal progress! Now you will trace at once the connection of ideas. Even this is only carrying a little further the idea of Maurice. The Englishman held the atonement to be identical with

the divine method of sanctification, or God's way of causing to be known and realized the fact of a divine indwelling in humanity. Our American editor, with a view perhaps to improve upon the human passiveness involved in the Englishman's theory, puts into it a little Yankee free agency. Observe, then, the swift advance of our theologic improvement! Once the decree of justification was the sovereign and gracious act of the Almighty, in view of the unspeakably meritorious gift of his Son. At length it ceased to be that, and became the realization of the divine immanence. And now, behold, it has ceased to be even that, assuming finally an absolutely human form, so that it is in the power of the sinner himself, when he shall so choose, to decree his own justification!

But I am dwelling too long. I shall not weary you with any reply to this latest revision,—or rather let me speak the honest truth—this latest belittling of the sublime doctrine of the atonement. I will not even offend in this presence by assuming that there can be any need of such a reply.

The Oberlin man whose hairs are now growing gray, and whose privilege it was to listen to the seminary instruction and the preaching of Charles G. Finney, will probably need to grow a good deal older still before he will be able to forget either of two correlated truths; namely, first, that the soul that refuses immediate compliance with the divine commands, incurs not simply misfortune, but actual guilt, by that refusal; and, secondly, that there is such a thing as a divine moral government, administered in accordance with laws that are holy, just, and good; laws that are so important, so sacred, of such supreme moment to man, to the universe, to the very throne of God, that not one sinner of

teaching the human heart to sing, "Amazing grace, and love unknown;" and that no other view ever has, or ever can, seize with such deep and moving grasp upon our moral nature. Oberlin, indeed, has never claimed any monopoly of these fundamental propositions, which find their echo in the profoundest intuitions of every man's being; but Oberlin *has* had an honorable part in the work of making them luminous in the eyes of the Christian world. Just as John the Baptist, by his fiery call, "Who hath warned *you* to flee from the wrath to come," made even the Sadducees, in spite of their philosophic denial, believe that there *was* a wrath to come; even so the high argument of certainty and authority uttered here in regard to these great verities, the ringing appeals to eternal and immutable intuition, the voice of God in the Spirit, in the Word, and in the breast of man,—these things have made the Oberlin testimony samewhat pre-eminently effective in the faith of the church and in the convictions of men. And the longer I live in the world, and move among men, the more do I thank God for this testimony, and the more do I see the need of it. And I may be permitted to add, even in the presence of men who would brook no flattery, and who are in fact above the reach of it, that the lamp here lighted by the princely founders of this Institution, nearly seventy years ago, shows no sign of growing dim.

Brethren of the Alumni, it was ours, as I have said, to receive here these truths in a clear and impressive form; be it also ours, in this time which especially needs them, to stand for them still as faithful witnesses.